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NEG BRITISH

28 June 1955

ALBANIA

- I. Two shakeups in the Albanian regime have taken place in last three weeks, with two top level men being dropped on charges of incompetence, Vice-Premier Tuk Jakova and Minister of Education and Culture Bedri Spahiu.
- II. Among possible reasons for changes could be a new orientation in Albanian policy toward Yugoslavia or a development in the long-reported rivalry between Premier Mehmet Shehu and Party First Secretary Enver Hoxha, or both.
- III. Evidence connecting these men with Yugoslavia is old.
 - A. One of men dismissed (Spahiu) headed commission which tried and condemned Koci Xoxe—the Albanian Titoist—in May 1949 and later was important mouth-piece for anti-Tito propaganda.
 - B. Other ^{man} dismissed (^{Jakova} ~~Heimann~~) reportedly went to Moscow in fall of 1948 to get Kremlin's orders concerning the removal of Xoxe and replaced Xoxe as ^{org} party ~~on~~-secretary.
 - C. On the other hand both men first started to slip from favor in 1951 with no apparent connection to Yugoslavia, with one of them Jakova making a partial comeback.

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D. This suggests present dismissal part of long term personal difficulties of the men within the party.

IV. In regard to the Shahu-Hoxha rivalry, evidence connecting the men involved with either top leader is tenuous and mostly based on rumor.

A. The strong^{est} evidence connects one man now moving up (Spiro Koleka, who becomes a Vice-Premier in addition to Politburo slot) as a Hoxha supporter, thus suggesting these changes may be a move on the part of Hoxha to reinforce his position.

1. Recently, there appears to have been a slightly unusual effort to build up Hoxha publicly contrasting with recent Albanian "collective leadership" practice.

2. A build-up of Hoxha would also fit into any Moscow desire to have Albania improve its relations with Tito, since he is the less anti-Tito of the two men involved.

V. Italian Foreign Ministry claims the shifts were because the men relieved were anti-Tito and were opposed to Albanian-Yugoslav rapprochement, especially fearing a Balkan Federation in which Moscow placed Tito at the head.

A. Italins² suggest time ripe for US actions such as raising the question

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of Albanian "neutrality"

B. This proposal shows Italian desire to create opportunity for more room

for Italian maneuvering in Balkans and suggests Rome is probably

exaggerating
~~suggesting~~ the imminence and degree of any Yugoslav-Albanian moves.

C. Yugoslavs have shown little indication of making extraordinary moves

towards Albania and in fact seem more interested in what can be done with

Bulgaria.

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